



Afternoon Alert - Tuesday, July 25, 2017

The following information reflects the reporting of the cited news media and does not reflect the opinions of the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Japan Media Highlights is intended for USG use only and should not be forwarded. Visit the website [here](#). For more information, contact TokyoMATT@state.gov.

HEADLINES

Noon news

Most networks gave top play to reports on the Upper House budget committee session on the Kake Gakuen scandal held this morning, during which Democratic Party leader Renho grilled Prime Minister Abe over his past Diet remarks on the scandal. Fuji TV led with a report that it has obtained what appears to be a memo on a meeting between Defense Minister Inada and senior MOD officials in February that strongly indicates she was aware of the existence of the daily activity logs of the GSDF troops deployed in South Sudan.

INTERNATIONAL

DPRK likely to launch ballistic missile within next few days

Jiji Press reported from Washington that according to a CNN report on Monday, a U.S. official said it is highly likely that North Korea will launch a ballistic missile within the next few days. The official said transporter vehicles carrying ballistic missile launching equipment were seen arriving in Kusong, North Korea, on July 21. The official said that when such equipment is seen, a launch could occur within six days. CNN reportedly suggested that North Korea may test-launch a missile on July 27, the North Korean holiday celebrating the armistice that ended the Korean War.

- [U.S. understanding of comfort women issue has declined under Trump administration](#) (Sankei)
- [Japan names new ambassador to Bulgaria](#) (Kyodo News)

OPINION POLLS

- [Cabinet support rate plummets to 34.7%, lowest ever for second Abe cabinet, Sankei-](#)

FNN poll (Sankei)

- [Ishiba ranks first as “most appropriate person for prime minister,” Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)
- [Cabinet support rate among women in 40s and 50s reaches danger zone, Sankei-FNN poll](#) (Sankei)
- [Opinion poll & results from Sankei Shimbun](#) (Sankei)
- [Record low Cabinet approval rating deals blow to Abe administration](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Drop in approval of comfort women agreement, Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll](#) (Mainichi)
- [70% of South Koreans in favor of their nation acquiring nuclear weapons, Japan-South Korea Joint Public Opinion Poll](#) (Yomiuri)

POLITICS

- [Abe, on hot seat amid sagging support, denies favoritism claims](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Abe explanation on Kake plan doesn't wash with opposition](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Mainichi editor describes interview with PM Abe after Tokyo assembly election debacle](#) (Shukan Ekonomisuto)
- [LDP's Koizumi in dilemma over whether to accept cabinet post](#) (Sankei)
- [Column: LDP factions expected to realign into three forces](#) (Shukan Toyo Keizai)
- [Cartoon: Ishiba warns Abe](#) (Kanagawa Shimbun)
- [As part of experiment, Consumer Affairs Agency transfers office from Tokyo to Tokushima](#) (The Japan Times)
- [Cultural Agency to be relocated to Kyoto police office](#) (Jiji Press)
- [Commentary: Focusing on economic growth, loosening fiscal discipline](#) (Asahi)
- [Prime minister's schedule on July 24](#) (Nikkei)

ECONOMY

- [Japan to keep reduced tariffs on imports from China, Brazil](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

- [Japan develops stronger appetite for US rice](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Gov't to decide in Sept. debris extraction method at Fukushima unit](#) (Kyodo News)
- [FCA mulling ending sales of Chrysler brand cars in Japan](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Japan hopes to better monitor radiation from overseas nuclear accidents](#) (Kyodo News)

SCIENCE

- [National Cancer Center Japan develops test to diagnose 13 kinds of cancer from single drop of blood](#) (Yomiuri)

SOCIETY

Sumo wrestler Hakuho's road to 1,050 victories

NHK's "Close-up Gendai+" carried an exclusive interview with sumo wrestler Hakuho, who has set a new record by achieving 1,050 victories. Hakuho, a native of Mongolia, talked about his most memorable bout, how he maintains his motivation, his love for his home country as well as Japan, and his desire to achieve his 40th career title.

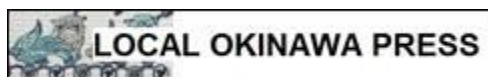
- [MOJ to provide interpretation via videophone for incarcerated foreigners](#) (Yomiuri)

SECURITY

PM Abe to attend former Okinawa governor's funeral

Jiji Press reported that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga announced this morning that Prime Minister Abe will attend the funeral of former Okinawa Governor Ota, who passed away at the age of 92 on June 12. The funeral will be held in Ginowan, Okinawa, on Wednesday. Suga said Ota "worked hard to deal with base issues and economic promotion measures" as the governor of Okinawa for eight years.

- [Okinawa files fresh lawsuit to halt U.S. base relocation](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Okinawa mulling next steps in legal battle over Henoko relocation](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [JCG fears war of attrition](#) (Sankei)
- [Brake fluid leaked from U.S. military aircraft at Yokota base](#) (Akahata)



Okinawa files suit over Henoko project

Ryukyu Shimpo and Okinawa Times led with reports on a lawsuit filed by the Okinawa Prefectural Government on Monday with the Naha District Court seeking a halt to the FRF construction at Henoko. The prefectural government is insisting that the central government failed to secure permission from the governor for work that involves demolishing rock reefs on the ocean floor in an area where fishing rights have been granted. However, the GOJ is arguing that there is no need to obtain permission because the fishing rights are no longer valid in the area. Governor Onaga expressed strong dissatisfaction toward the central government.

Ryukyu Shimpo speculated that the prefectural government filed the lawsuit to demonstrate to the people of Okinawa that it is taking action to stop the construction work and to draw the attention of people outside Okinawa. The paper added that although many people in Okinawa have expressed support and understanding for the governor's latest move, some feel it is useless to wage a legal battle with the central government.

Noting that this is the fifth lawsuit filed by the prefectural government over Futenma relocation, Okinawa Times wrote that there is concern among prefectural government officials that some people in Okinawa have doubts about the effectiveness of the local government's strategy of waging multiple legal battles against the central government.

